

Message Text

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20

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SUBJ: CALL FOR GENERAL STRIKE IN MADRID FIZZLES

BUT UNIVERSITY SITUATION WORSENS

REF: MADRID 1103

BEGIN SUMMARY: "DAY OF STRUGGLE" CALLED FOR BY CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS IN MADRID FEB 20 FAILED TO SHUT DOWN ANY MAJOR FACTORY OR PUBLIC SERVICE BUT STUDENTS SUCCEEDED IN HOLDING SEVERAL DEMONSTRATIONS RESULTING IN 90 ARRESTS. SIGNIFICANT WORK STOPPAGES TOOK PLACE IN VIGO ARES, BUT MAIN INDUSTRIAL AREAS OF BARCELONA AND BILBAO WERE RELATIVELY STRIKE-FREE. CLOSURE OF UNIV OF VALLADOLID FEB 7, HOWEVER, SPARKED NATIONWIDE CLOSURES OF SOLIDARITY BY OTHER UNIV FACULTIES, MAKING UNIV SITUATION SEEMINGLY MORE CRITICAL THAN LABOR SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

1. "DAY OF STRUGGLE" PREPARED BY CLANDESTINE GROUPS FOR FEB 20 IN MADRID WAS FAILURE FROM STANDPOINT OF SHUTDOWN OF ANY MAJOR PUBLIC SERVICE OR PRIVATE FACTORY (REFTEL).

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GOVT HAD MOBILIZED CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC ORDER FORCES IN EVENT

OF ANY MAJOR DISRUPTION OF CITY LIFE BUT THESE FORCES WERE ONLY USED TO BREAK OF ILLEGAL MEETINGS ON UNIV GROUNDS OF STUDENTS AND VARIOUS STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS THROUGHOUT CITY. FOR FIRST TIME SSTUDENTS SUCCEEDED IN AMASSING GROUP IN FRONT OF MINISTRY OF EDUCATION IN CITY CENTER. ALTHOUGH POLICE PREVENTED THEM MARCHING THERE DIRECTLY,STUDENTS SHOWEVED SKILL IN MEETING AT APPOINTED TIME IN FRONT OF MINISTRY. POLICE BROKE UP MEETINGS IN VARIOUS PLACES IN CITY INCLUDING IN FRONT OF MINISTRY AND ARRESTED TOTAL OF 90 ONE STUDENT AND ONE POLICEMAN WERE SLIGHTLY INJURED. AMONT ARRESTED WERE ONE PRIEST AND THREE WOMEN INVOLVED IN SIT-DOWN I N MIDDLE OF MAIN CITY HIGHWAY TO DEMONSTRATE NEED FOR UNDERPASS FOR PEDESTRIANSSO SEVERAL EMBASSY CONTACTS REPORTED THAT SOME SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ALSO TOOK PART IN DEMONSTRATIONS.

3. DIRGEN OF SECURITY ISSUED A STATEMENT LATE FEB 20 DESCRIBING EVENTS OF DAY AND POLICE DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC ORDER AND NORMAL FUNCTIONING OF MARKETS, TRANSPORT AND ENTERPRISES. DGS BLAMED "CLANDESTINE COMMUNISTS" AND "LEAGUE OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST/ETA SIXTH ASSEMBLY" (LEFTIST BASQUE ORGANIZATION, AS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROMOTING "DAY OF STRUGGLE". STATEMENT ALSO ALLUDES TO EFFORTS BY STUDENTS TO IFGITE WOMEN IN AT LEAST ONE MARKET PLACE TO ABSTAIN FROMM PURCHASES (RUMORS PREVIOUS DAY ALLEGED THAT MARKETS WOULD BE CLSSED FEB 20 IN SOLIDARITY WITH "DAY OF STRUGGLE" BUT IN EFFECT, MARKETS WERE OPEN AND THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS OTHER THAN ONE CITED IN DGS STATEMENT). DGS STATEMENT ALSO REFUTED REPORTS IN "INFORMACIONES" SSAME DAY SAYING APPROX 5,000 STUDENTS HAD DEMONSTRATED PEACEFULLY WHEREAS POLICE IN EFFECT HAD BEEN OBJECT OF FLYING STONES AND INSULTS BY STUDENTS.

3. CONSUL BILBAO REPORTS THAT BABCOCK/WILCOX AND FIRESTONE PLANTS REMAINED CLOSED, OTHERWISE SITUATION WAS RELATIVELY CALM. EFFORTS TO HOLD STRIKE AT G.E. AND WESTINGHOUSE PLANTS FAILED. UNIV WAS CLOSED OUT OF SOLIDARITY WITH GOVT CLOSURE OF VALLADOLID UNIV. CONGEN BARCELONA REPORTED THAT THERE WERE NO SIGNIFICANT LABOR PROBLEMS AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MOMENT BUT THREE CATALAN UNIVERSITIES WERE CLOSED FOR MOST PART AS WELL AS SOME SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN PROTEST AGAINST GOVT'S DECISION SHUTTING DOWN UNIV OF VALLADOLID. APPROX 7,500 WORKERS STURCK IN VARIOUS PLANTS AT VIGO.

4. SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE DEMONSTRATED IN MAIN SQUARE OF VALLADOLID FEB 20 IN RESPONSE TO APPEALS BY CLANDESTINE ORGANIZATIONS. POLICE BROKE UP DEMONSTRATIONS AND REPORTEDLY

ARRESTED SEVERAL PEOPLE INCLUDING CORRESPONDENT OF "EL NORTE DE CASTILLA" WHO WAS SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED. MEANWHILE, ONE OF UNIV STUDENTS, JOSE LUIS CANCHO, SENTENCED JAN 20 TO FOUR YEAR TERM FOR MEMBERSHIP IN ILLEGAL INT'L COMMUNIST PARTY (TROYSKYST ORIENTATION), WHICH SPARKED SERIES OF INCIDENTS LEADING TO CLOSURE, STARTED HUNGER STRIKE FEB 19. CANCHO HAS ALREADY BECOME "CAUSE CELEBRE" BECAUSE HE RECOVERED MIRACUOUSLY, ALTHOQEQB PERMANENTLY AN INVALID, FROM FALL FROM FOURTH FLOOR OF POLICE HQS IN JAN 1973 WHEN HE WAS FIRST ARREESTED.

5. GOVT CLOSURE OF UNIV OF VALLADOLID FEB 12 HAS HAD REPERCUSSIONS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. COUNCIL OF WORKERS OF VALLADOLID HAS ASKED PUBLICLY THAT MEASURE AGAINST FOUR UNIV FACULTIES BE ATTENUATED. FIVE FACULTIES AT UNIV OF SALAMANCA AS WELL AS PONTIFICAL UNIV IN SALAMANCA HAVE CLOSED IN SOLIDARITY IN PROTEST AGAINST GOVT'S DECISION WITH RESPECT TO UNIV OF VALLADOLID. SEVERAL FACULTIES OF UNIV OF SAN SEBASTIAN HAVE ALSO SHUT DOWN IN SOLIDARITY.

6. COMMENT: CONTRARY TO THEIR EXPECTATIONS THAT LABOR ORGANIZERS MIGHT BE ABLE TO INCREASE POLITICAL ACTIVISM AMONG WHITE COLLAR WORKERS, GOVT EMPLOYEES, AND SHOPKEEPERS, FAILURE OF "DAY OF STRUGGLE" INDICATES THAT POINT HAS NOT YET BEEN REACHED WHERE THESE GROUPS CAN BE EASILY MANIPULATED BY CLANDESTINE PARTIES. GOVT'S DETERMINATION TO PRESERVE PUBLIC ORDER AND PREVENT DISTURBANCES, MOST RECENTLY STATED AT CONCLUSION OF COUNCIL OF MINISTER'S MEETING FEB 14, TOGETHER WITH DEPLOYMENT OF POLICE FORCES, MAY ALSO HAVE DISCOURAGED GENERAL STRIKE.

7. SIGNIFICANT POLARIZATION OF UNIV ISSUES AROUND GOVT CLOSURE OF UNIV OF VALLADOLID HAS MADE UNIV PROBLEM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SEEMINGLY MORE VISIBLE AND SERIOUS THAN LAVOR ISSUES. STUDENTS, SUPPORTED BY SOME PROFESSORS, HAVE DEMONSTRATED SOPHISTICATION IN ORGANIZING AND COORDINATING DEMONSTRATIONS, AS WELL AS IN MOBILIZING NATIONWIDE SOLIDARITY AGAINST VALLADOLID CLOSURE. THERE IS BELIEF IN MANY CIRCLES THAT GOVT WAS OVERLY HARSH IN CLOSING DOWN UNIV OF VALLADOLID BECAUSE OF A BREAKDOWN IN ACADEMIC AND CAMPUS ORDER THERE. LEADERS OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS ELECTED LEGALLY UNDER FALL 1974 MINISTERIAL DECREE IN MADRID AND VALLADOLID HAVE TURN OUT TO BE VERY ONES WHO HAVE LED PROTEST MARCH AND EFFORTS TO OUST RECTOR IN VALLADOLID. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION APPARENTLY HAD TRIED MAKE EXAMPLE OF VALLADOLID TO DISSUADE OTHER UNIV CENTERS FROM ALLOWING LEFTIST MINORITY GROUPS FROM FURTHER UNDERMINING ACADEMIC ORDER. DANGER IN UNIV SITUATION IS

CIRCUMSTANCE THAT FE W PEOPLE ARE SATISFIED WITH EXISTING
CONDITIONS: (A) CONTRACTUAL PROFESSORS HAVE NO STATUS YET THEY
DO SAME WORK AS PROFESSORS WITH TENURE; (B) STUDENTS BELIEVE
THAT THEY AR E NOT ADEQUATELY REPRDZENTED IN ACADEMIC BODIES;
(C) ADMINISTRATORS BELIEVE THAT THEY NEED MORE SUPPORT TO
COPE WITH PROBLEMS ENGENDERED BY MASS CHARACTER OF UNIV
ENROLLEMENT; AND (D) FAMILIES OF STUDENTS OR POTENTIAL
STUDENTS BELIEVE THAT 1974 SELECTIVITY (ADMISSION) LAW IS
UNFAIR. ALL OF THESE ISSUES HAVE COME TO A HEAD AT
VALLADOLID WHERE LEFTIST ELEMENTS HAVE APPARENTLY
EXPLOITED THEM TO POLITICIZE ACTIVIST STUDENT MINORITY.
SPAIN MAY BE FACING DIFFICULT PERIOD WITH UNIVERSITIES
COMPARABLE TO SITUATION WHICH PREVAILED A DECADE AGO.
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